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**A. INBOUND TRANSPORTATION****1. Know What to Do on Arrival at Post Abroad**

- a. When you arrive at post abroad, *you should*:
  - 1) Give your GSO the address and phone number where you can be reached;
  - 2) Collect your pets - arrange for importation and pick-up of your own pets, making sure you comply with local restrictions and quarantine;
  - 3) Get firearms cleared - arrange for importation of your firearms and ammunitions through a customs broker or your GSO.
- b. When you arrive at post abroad, *the GSO at post will*:
  - 1) Arrange for duty-free importation of your air freight, household effects, consumables and POV;
  - 2) Coordinate with you and post's moving company to establish a date for delivery of your UAB and HHE;
  - 3) Trace delayed or missing shipments;
  - 4) Assist with claims for damaged shipments.

**2. Know What to Do on Arrival at Post in U.S.**

- a. When you arrive at post in the U.S., **you should**:
  - 1) Give your Transportation Counselor (TC) the address and phone number where you can be reached (call your TC at ☎ 202-647-4140 or ☎ 800-424-2947);
  - 2) Call your TC periodically to check on the arrival of UAB and HHE, and to get the name and number of the moving company that is handling your inbound shipments.
  - 3) Pick up your pets - arrange for importation of your own pets, making sure you comply with restrictions and quarantine;

There is no temporary storage for POVs. You must take possession immediately, once your vehicle arrives in the US

Remember that you are allowed 90 days storage from your day of entry on duty—not from the day the HHE arrives in the US.

For UAB, movers are contracted only to bring it inside and to cut steel banding. They are not contracted to unpack it

- 4) Clear your liquor shipments - **You must arrange for importation and payment of duty on alcoholic beverage shipments, through your chosen customs broker** (see OUTBOUND for guidance on shipping alcohol – page 20);
- 5) Get firearms cleared - arrange for importation of your firearms and ammunition through a customs broker or other assistant (see OUTBOUND for rules on sending firearms back to the U.S.-page 19);
- 6) Comply with special storage rules for Washington assignments - **All lots must come out of storage.** This includes any long-term permanent storage that you may not have seen in 10 years, as well as effects in 90 days' temporary storage. You should inform Transportation about your plans for your effects in storage. You are allowed up to 90 days storage from your **day of entry on duty**, but you must let Transportation know whether to store your effects temporarily or authorize delivery immediately. **Beyond 90 days, you will be responsible for all storage costs.** The Government will still pay for the delivery and unpacking of your effects, but you must usually settle the extra charges with the storage company before delivery is allowed (and then voucher allowable expenses);
- 7) Schedule deliveries directly with companies - You must **schedule** the delivery of your shipments of effects or storage **directly with the companies involved.** The authorizations for transportation of effects will have been sent to the companies by Transportation, if you have informed Transportation of your plans. If your incoming shipment/s has/have arrived, the company must deliver your effects **within 5 working days of your telephone request** to them for delivery. Usually, a follow-up call to the delivery company the afternoon preceding the actual date of arranged delivery will provide you with an approximate time for the arrival of your effects the following day.



**NOTE:** Generally a minimum of 10 to 14 days is required to unload effects from a ship, clear them through Customs and move them to the inbound contractor in the Washington area.

- 8) Contact Transportation to learn which drive-away service will deliver your POV to you from port. **Remember to inspect your car very carefully before signing the service's release or receipt form.**

- 9) Prepare your receipts and documents in order to file your vouchers within the time limitation. For permanent change of station travel, vouchers must be submitted within 7 days of arrival at post. If you are in extended travel status or on training, your vouchers should be submitted within 7 days of the end of each 30-day period.
- b. When you arrive at post in the United States, **the *Transportation Division at Main State will:***
- 1) Arrange for duty-free entry of your HHE, UAB, and POV;
  - 2) Advise you, **upon your request** for information, of the date of arrival of your UAB, HHE, or POV, and inform you of the name of the company **you must contact** to arrange for delivery of effects to your permanent quarters;
  - 3) Prepare for delivery of your effects, or authorization for up to **90 days' temporary storage** at government expense;
  - 4) Trace delayed or missing shipments;
  - 5) Assist with claims for damaged shipments.

### **3. Supervise Your Unpacking Day**

a. **Your role** --

- 1) Decide on the arrangement of each room in your new residence - Before the movers arrive, you should know where you want furniture to be placed in each room. Start with rug placement, and then move to major pieces of furniture. Small items should be unpacked last. Before movers arrive, use your copy of your inventory to mark which room each carton should go in, as it arrives; this makes unpacking easier for both you and the movers. If you are expecting multiple shipments, HHE and storage for example, stage the delivery. Have the larger pieces, which are probably in storage, delivered first.
- 2) For your convenience, try to ensure that phone service, electricity, water, and other utilities are connected prior to your move-in day. At post abroad, check with your GSO regarding utilities and telephone service. In the U.S. make arrangements several days in advance. You are entitled to **one day** of Administrative Leave for unpacking. Your supervisor may

Plan the placement of heavy objects carefully. The movers' contract does not require them to move objects several times as you search for the best location.

grant a **second** day of Administrative Leave if needed. (3 FAH-1H-3465; <http://arpsdir.a.state.gov>)

Depending upon space in your neighborhood, you may have to ask your neighbors to leave extra space to accommodate the moving van.

If you run into problems, contact Transportation immediately. It is much easier to deal with difficulties "on the spot" than "after the fact."

- 3) Have cold drinks, paper cups (since your dishes will not yet be available), soap, extra paper towels and toilet paper available in your new residence. Especially if you have not moved in at all, even with your UAB, these are items you might not otherwise have on hand.
- 4) Arrange with your apartment management, or custodian if applicable, to have **access to elevator keys. Also, arrange with apartment management for space to accommodate the moving van.**
- 5) Direct the movers to carry out all services listed in section "b" below which you would like performed. ***The delivery receipt or other document should not be signed until all the services that you desire have been completed.*** Keep the phone number of your GSO or the Transportation Division **(800-424-2947)** or **(202-647-4140)** handy in the event you run into problems. (Try to unpack the box containing your phone early in the process).
- 6) During the unloading of your shipments, whether or not unpacking is done at that time, you should have a copy of your inventory and check off each item as it is unloaded. The inventory number of any item(s) missing should be noted on the delivery receipt.
- 7) If damage or loss is detected at the time of delivery, note exceptions on the delivery receipt **before signing**. Any damage done to your property or that of your neighbors must also be listed on the receipt. Failure to do so will relieve the delivery company of any liability for the loss or damage, and prevent the U.S. Government from honoring any subsequent claim. ***If you do not unpack all the boxes on pack-in day, you should note "Contents Subject to Further Inspection" on the receipt before signing.*** You have 75 days from the date of delivery either to file a complete claim for damage/loss or to send an intent-to-file memorandum to Claims via e-mail (ClaimsQuery@state.gov), FAX (202 647 2800), mail (A/LM/OPS/TTM/CL, Room 1245 - HST) or hand delivery. **Once the memorandum is sent, you then have two years from the date of delivery of the goods to submit the claim for**

**damage/loss. However, it is to your advantage to file a claim within one year of receiving the goods.**

- 8) See Part III-C of "It's Your Move" for more information on the Claims Act. You can also consult the INTRANET site: "Personal Property Claims" (<http://almopsttm.a.state.gov/claims.htm>). If your claim is for less than \$1,000, you may use the "Fast Track" form (DS1620F) available at the site given above.
- 9) For questions, you can contact the Claims Office by phone (202 736 7648, by e-mail (ClaimsQuery@state.gov), by mail (A/LM/OPS/TTM/CL-Room 1245 HST) or in person.

b. **Movers' responsibilities --**

- 1) Opening all lift vans and carrying the contents into your residence;
- 2) Placing items of furniture in appropriate rooms. **(Do not expect the packing company to move furniture around within a room more than once);**
- 3) Laying rug pads and rug. This is not applicable if furniture is already in place from a previous shipment. **The company will not move furniture to lay rugs or pads;**
- 4) Opening and unpacking all containers and placing kitchenware, chinaware, glassware, silverware, linens, etc., in specified locations (You may also elect to unpack containers yourself so as to know where items are placed.);
- 5) Setting up beds, including placing springs and mattresses on bed frames and installing mirrors on dressers;
- 6) Unpacking crates containing pictures and mirrors. You, however, are responsible for hanging them, not the contractor; and
- 7) Removing from your premises all trash, empty cartons and debris that result from the unpacking process. However, **if you choose to unpack some or all the containers later, the contractor is not required to make a second trip to your residence to dispose of the empty containers and packing materials.**

The Department and each post generally require that movers be courteous, neat, and in proper uniform. If you experience any serious problems with the manner in which your effects are delivered, please contact Transportation or your GSO.

## **B. INBOUND TRAVEL: ACCOUNTING FOR TICKETS AND ADVANCES**

1. **Refunds and Airline Bonus Coupons, etc.** - Bonus tickets and bonus mileage given you by the airlines because of trips paid for by the Government, used to be U.S. Government property. However, on December 28, 2001, legislation was signed permitting the individual to use frequent flyer miles earned through USG funded travel either to up-grade accommodations for official travel or to obtain tickets for private travel. Upgrades of existing USG funded fares must be authorized in advance. Even if the legislation was signed in December of 2001, the authority applies retroactively to benefits received before the legislation was signed.
2. **Unused Tickets and GTRs (Government Travel Request)** - If you have government- issued tickets or unused GTRs left over after your travel is completed, you should turn them in to your GSO or file them with your voucher if you are assigned to the U.S. (Essentially, the GTR has been discontinued.)
3. **Filing Your Travel Voucher** - All travelers are responsible for accounting for disbursements of U.S. Government funds. You must use a travel voucher to itemize these expenses, providing your travel orders, original copies of your GTRs, your airline or train tickets, receipts for lodgings, etc., so it can be certified that funds were spent according to governing regulations. You are responsible for preparing and filing your travel voucher within 7 days of completion of Permanent Change of Station (PCS) travel. Reimbursement, however, often takes a month and the traveler is apt to receive bills from the trip before the funds for paying the bills have been received.
4. **Where to Get Help** - Travelers may get help from the **Travel Service Center in Room I258 Main State**, or when at post, from the Financial Management Officer (FMO) or his/her staff.